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not so much in what the few might, as in what all may, attain. The growth of refinement and luxury in the ancient states increased the burdens and multiplied the disabilities of the multitude, while every new element of Christian culture tends to elevate the masses. The social landscape of the Periclean and the Augustan age shows us mountains reaching to the clouds, separated by awfully deep, sunless ravines, both equally barren. Christian ideas and institutions are constantly tending so to remodel society, that gently swelling hills shall alternate with fertile, well-watered valleys, and that there shall be verdure, bloom, and beauty alike on hill and plain. The work, indeed, is only begun ; but every antagonist principle with which it has to contend belongs to the old order of things, is of pagan origin, and is already yielding ground, as Christian ideas more and more pervade the great heart of society, are embodied in literature, adopted by governments, and made active by individual philanthropy.

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ART. VIII. — 1. *The Past, the Present, and the Future.*

By H. C. CAREY, Author of "Principles of Political Economy," etc. Philadelphia : Carey and Hart. 1848. 8vo. pp. 474.

2. *The Religious Theory of Civil Government : a Discourse delivered before the Governor and the Legislature of Massachusetts, at the Annual Election, Wednesday, January 5th, 1848.* By ALEXANDER H. VINTON, Rector of St. Paul's Church. Boston : Dutton and Wentworth, Printers. 8vo. pp. 46.

MANY excellent persons, if we may judge from their repeated declarations, have come to entertain very desponding views respecting the condition and prospects of the American people. They say that it is all over with the republic, that our country is too large for union, too sordid for patriotism, and too democratic for liberty ; and that our doom is sealed, and we are fast hurrying to ruin. We cannot wonder that such thoughts find frequent utterance, since, from the rapidity of communication from one extremity of the land to the other, and from the craving of the public mind for news and scan-

dal, every crime against the laws, every offence against the higher rules of Christian courtesy and morality, and every weak or foolish action of those who occupy prominent positions in the state, are matters of immediate record in the newspapers, which convey the intelligence with incredible speed to every fireside in the country. Whoever turns over the files of the city or the village news-room finds so many instances of depravity and corruption chronicled there, that, in the spirit of the self-accusing Edgar in *Lear*, he may exclaim of our countrymen, — They love wine deeply, dice dearly, and are “false of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand.” Perhaps, too, when musing upon what is passing around him, or when looking at “the great image of authority,” he is reminded of the words of the mad old king himself: — “A man may see how this world goes with no eyes ” ; for

“The usurer hangs the cozener.

Through tattered clothes small vices do appear :  
Robes and furred gowns hide all. Plate sin with gold,  
And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks :  
Arm it in rags, a pigmy’s straw doth pierce it.”

We propose to discuss some of the questions suggested by these remarks, and to inquire whether the prediction of Proud, the loyalist historian of Pennsylvania, and of others of similar political views, that “the revolt of the Colonies would prove the certain cause and commencement of the decline of national virtue and prosperity,” has been, or is likely to be, fulfilled. More than this, we would inquire whether we have not in fact made some progress in morals since the duty of maintaining our institutions devolved upon ourselves, and whether many of the sins and evils, which now appear overwhelming and disheartening, were not bequeathed to us by our fathers. In performing this task we shall endeavour to remember the injunction of the excellent and gifted Ames, that “the earth we tread on holds the bones of the deceased patriots of the Revolution,” though, in comparing the past with the present, allusion to the faults and imperfections of the men whom we are taught, and most justly, to reverence, will be both unavoidable and continual. They, it is of importance to observe, were colonists, and were destitute of the means of moral and intellectual improvement which are possessed by us, and which we ob-

tained by their exertions, their blood and treasure. If, then, we have made no progress, we are indeed highly criminal. Colonists, it is never to be forgotten, have no character of their own. Their habits and manners are formed on models from abroad. The official personages who reside among them are generally natives of the mother country, and they, with other persons of the same birthplace, who seek to repair their broken fortunes or to acquire wealth in colonial possessions, keep up the general feeling of dependence and of commercial and political connection with persons "at home," and exercise a controlling influence. The public and private records which have been transmitted to us show distinctly, that in some essential particulars the inhabitants of the thirteen Colonies, as a body, are to be judged by the rules which apply to the present British American colonists in this hemisphere.

The first subject which presents itself for consideration is obviously the state of religious feeling. Many persons seem to apprehend that the religious affections are fast dying out, and that we shall become ere long a nation of skeptics.

We must confess that there are some indications which may well alarm the most hopeful minds ; but we are very far from believing that all the gloomy forebodings and imaginings which come to us from the pulpit and the press are likely to be verified. In unbelief in America there is nothing new. There were persons in the bosom of the church in the time of the gentle John Cotton, — the Melancthon of the New World, — who denied the immortality of the soul, and maintained, to the horror of the Puritan clergymen of that age, that the Sabbath was but as other days. These and other similar heresies were deemed then, as they are now, to be "growing evils," and caused great alarm to the ministers and magistrates, who were required to rebuke them ; but they passed away, and none except the students of history now recall or allude to them.

At the Revolutionary period, the principles of unbelief were diffused to a considerable extent throughout the Colonies. It is certain that several of the most conspicuous personages in those days were either avowed disbelievers in Christianity, or cared so little about it that they were commonly regarded as disciples of the English or French schools of skeptical philosophy. In one class or the other may be included some

of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, several ambassadors to foreign courts, and other statesmen, some able political writers, and some generals and other military officers of rank. Particular mention of them is not necessary, though we may briefly refer to some of the most prominent deists of the time. One of them wrote the celebrated pamphlet called "Common Sense," which did more, beyond all doubt, than any other production, to prepare the colonists for a separation from England. Another was the leading Whig of Vermont, and probably the first native of America who published a work intended to ridicule Moses and the Prophets. He believed with Pythagoras in the transmigration of the soul after death, and often said that he himself expected to live again, in the form of a large white horse. A third was the officer in the army next in rank to the illustrious Commander-in-chief, — a man immoral in life and profane in conversation, who scoffed at every article of the Christian faith. Still another, and the earliest professed teacher of deism in this country of whom we have any knowledge, graduated at Dartmouth College soon after the close of the Revolution, and fixing his residence first in New York, and subsequently in Philadelphia, established the "Columbian Illuminati," with nearly one hundred members, and commenced the publication of the "Temple of Reason," a paper devoted to the dissemination of deistical sentiments. He was a person of considerable talent, was eminently successful in winning proselytes, and fancied that he had founded a sect ; and in his discourses to his followers, he labored fearlessly and zealously to overthrow every system of religious belief. Yet his work perished ; a generation has elapsed since his death, and neither he nor his fulminations against Christianity are heeded or remembered. As it has been, so will it be. New speculations of the same general character have succeeded, but these, also, after misleading men for a time, will be laid aside and forgotten. The most abject of our race will rough-hew blocks of wood and fragments of stone, rather than worship nothing. Human nature, savage and civilized, craves and will find a Being to adore. The feeling, the desire to bend in confession, to look up for help, to petition for blessing and mercy, is inborn, and cannot be rooted out or repressed.

In concluding this branch of the topic, we shall not under-

take to show whether, in proportion to the population, skepticism is more widely diffused than it was in our fathers' time. Yet were we to admit, what many insist upon, that unbelief prevails to a greater extent than at any former period of our history, we should still contend that the unbelievers of the present generation, unlike those of the last, even while denying the divine authority of Christianity, do in truth submit to many of its precepts and commands, and that a large portion of them neither defend nor permit laxity of morals. We claim, therefore, at the least, that infidelity now exists in a modified form, and is far less pernicious in its consequences upon American society. It was said of the younger Pitt, that he "was indifferent about the *forms* of religion." This remark will apply to many of his contemporaries of elevated station in both hemispheres. Something has been gained, then, as will be readily allowed, if skeptics so far defer to the opinions of believers, as to mingle with them in places consecrated to religious worship, to refrain from promulgating their views in coarse and vulgar essays, and to reserve the expression of their doubts and sneers for confidential conversations with each other. There is proof of progress in the fact, that they no longer shock public decency, and turn in shame from Paine and his foul language and conduct.

We come now to speak of the lust of conquest, and the insatiable thirst for the acquisition of territory. This is criminal, but it was the besetting sin of the stock from whom, in the pride of our hearts, we claim to be descended; — the sin of the Saxons, the Danes, and the Normans, whose blood, first mingling in strife on the battle-field for the mastery of England, and then in family alliances, now flows in our veins. The Englishmen of the last eight centuries sprung from, and are the present representatives of, these three races; and acting upon the axiom, that "The world's power, like its wealth, can never remain one moment without a possessor," they have anticipated the grasp of others, and, upon various self-satisfying pretences, have appropriated to themselves a large share of all the territory inhabited or inhabitable by the human family. Of these Englishmen we are the true children. Our annals, from the hour that our ancestors approached these shores in humility, weariness, and want, down to the present time, when we go forth in pride and power, are stained with the record of wrongs done to those whose

skins are redder than our own, whose lands we coveted, but did not need, and whose extirpation we decreed, and have nearly accomplished. For the first century, these annals are crowded with the accounts of quarrels among ourselves about the boundary lines of patents and grants of territories which we could not settle, and which were almost worthless. Yet no man was allowed to speak against or question the validity of parchment titles ; and had Roger Williams acknowledged that the signature of a Stuart could dispossess the Indians of their native soil without their consent, he might not have been driven into banishment.

The story of our encroachments upon the lands occupied by settlers from other European nations is written in our earliest records. The Dutch were the probable discoverers, as they certainly were the first settlers, of the Connecticut valley. There is now, indeed, no cause to regret that the banks of the Connecticut were finally colonized by people of our own kindred ; but we must smile at the reasons assigned for occupying them by the historian Hubbard, who says that "the places about the Bay were already in a manner taken up," that Massachusetts was "overpressed with multitudes of new families," and that, "as like an hive of bees overstocked, there was a *necessity that some should swarm out.*" At the period to which Hubbard refers, be it remembered, Boston was not ten years old, and the country in the interior was almost an unbroken wilderness. The Puritans at Plymouth also had their eyes fixed upon this "famous river," and they vied with the planters of Dorchester, Roxbury, Watertown, and Cambridge, who quitted their hives to swarm thither.

Soon, again, our fathers were stinted for room, and must needs send off a swarm of Roundheads to root out Gorges and his cavaliers from Maine. The territory covered by his patent was not wanted, and was an incumbrance to Massachusetts, from the time of her first jurisdiction over it until she relinquished it. Politically, however, her grasping policy was wise, since, if she had acted otherwise, it is probable that the country between the Kennebec and the St. Croix, which comprises nearly two thirds of Maine, would never have formed a part of the United States.

Let us now look at the projects for the conquest of the colonies of France in this hemisphere. William and Mary

were hardly seated on the throne, before a native of Maine presented himself at court to ask for their countenance and aid in an enterprise to extinguish French power in America. Between the settlements of the Puritans and those of the Catholics there were broad seas, and hundreds of miles of forest land which Europeans had scarcely explored ; but the French were bad neighbours, they were competitors upon the fishing-grounds, and must consequently be expelled. The ambitious plan, when once conceived, was pursued with Saxon tenacity until it was accomplished, though the struggle caused the soil of Canada and Nova Scotia to be drenched with the blood of American colonists.

If our limits would permit, we might go on to speak of the encroachments of one patentee upon another in Virginia, which were among the causes of Bacon's rebellion ; of the sacrifice of life in the quarrel between Pennsylvania and Connecticut for the ownership of the lands on the Susquehanna ; of the scarcely less hostile relations which existed between New York and New Hampshire, on account of the disputed possession of the country now called Vermont, which wellnigh involved the claimants in a civil war ; and of many other cases which show that the Colonies, both collectively and individually, often manifested a disposition to acquire domains which did not rightfully belong to them, and of which they were not really in want. It was said by a pious and learned chronicler, nearly two centuries ago, that there was an "impulsive cause which did secretly drive on the business" of widening our territorial limits. That cause, we are sorry to believe, still impels us onward.

The Whigs of the Revolution were by no means exempt from the lust of dominion. Several of them were among the most noted land-speculators of their time. In the progress of the war, and in a manner hardly to be defended, we find them sequestering and appropriating to themselves the vast estates of their opponents. While the issue of the contest was yet doubtful, they lost sight of its original purposes, and in their endeavours to procure the alliance of France, they proposed that she should join them in an enterprise to conquer her own former colonial possessions in America ; and the Saxon thirst for boundless sway may be seen in their calm and thoughtful proposition, to keep nearly all the soil and fishing-grounds to be acquired for their own use and



aggrandizement.\* The same motives led to the purchase of Louisiana without any regard to the wishes of the people who inhabited it, though they might not have objected to the transfer ; nor had this grasping disposition in our councils come to an end, when we attempted, in 1812, to subdue and annex the Canadas, or when we bargained with Spain for the Floridas. The annexation of Texas is the first deed consummated, for which the *present* generation can be held entirely and exclusively responsible.

We are next to consider the oft repeated charge, that, as a nation, we are increasing in sordidness and the love of gain. It may seem an insufficient, or at any rate a melancholy, defence against such an accusation, to show, that, in this respect, the hearts of a former generation were not more pure or liberal than our own. But our purpose is to correct the exaggerated and gloomy views which are sometimes taken of the degenerate spirit of the present times, founded on an erroneous, because partial, estimate of the virtues of a by-gone age. History is always one-sided in respect to the merits of a generation which has but recently passed off the stage ; it seems an act of piety to remember their good qualities and forget their faults. But it is profitable occasionally to contemplate the reverse of the picture, so as to check the querulous spirit, in reference to our own age, which is fed by the gossiping accounts of newsmongers and by the heated declamations of some worthy philanthropists. We appeal, then, to the Revolutionary era for proof that avarice and rapacity were as common then as now. The stock-jobbing, the extortion, the forestalling, the low arts and devices to amass wealth, that were practised during the war for independence, seem almost incredible. Washington mourned the want of virtue as early as 1775, and averred that he "trembled at the prospect." Soldiers were stripped of their miserable pittance, that contractors might become rich in a single campaign. Many of the sellers of merchandise monopolized articles of the first necessity, and would not part with them to their suffering countrymen, and to the wives and children of those who were

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\* The envoys to the French court were instructed to propose, that in case of success, France should possess one half of Newfoundland, while we should retain the other moiety of that island, the whole of Cape Breton, and the whole of Nova Scotia, which then included the present colony of New Brunswick.

absent in the field, unless at enormous profits. The traffic carried on with the royal troops was immense ; men of all descriptions finally engaged in it, and those who at the commencement of the struggle would have shuddered at the idea of any connection with the enemy pursued it with avidity. The public securities were often counterfeited, official signatures were forged, and plunder and robbery openly indulged. Appeals to the guilty from the pulpit, the press, and the halls of legislation were alike unheeded. The decline of public spirit, the rapacity of those in office, were matters of general complaint ; the plottings of disaffected persons and the malevolence of faction became widely spread, and, in parts of the country, were uncontrollable. The useful occupations of life and the legitimate pursuits of commerce were abandoned by thousands. The basest of men enriched themselves, and many of the most estimable sunk into obscurity and indigence. There were those who would neither pay their debts nor their taxes. The finances of the state and the fortunes of individuals were, to an alarming extent, at the mercy of gamblers and speculators.

The indignation of Washington was freely expressed. "It gives me very sincere pleasure," he said, in a letter to his friend Reed, "to find that the Assembly [of Pennsylvania] is so well disposed to second your endeavours in bringing those murderers of our cause, the monopolizers, forestallers, and engrossers, to condign punishment. It is much to be lamented, that each State long ere this has not hunted them down as pests to society, and the greatest enemies we have to the happiness of America. No punishment, in my opinion, is too great for the man who can build his greatness upon his country's ruin."

In writing to another friend, he drew this picture, which he solemnly declared to be a true one. "From what I have seen, heard, and in part know," said he, "I should in one word say, that idleness, dissipation, and extravagance seem to have laid fast hold of most ; that speculation, speculation, and an insatiable thirst for riches seem to have got the better of every other consideration, and almost every order of men ; and that party disputes and personal quarrels are the great business of the day." In other letters he laments the laxity of the public morals, the "distressed, ruinous, and deplorable condition of affairs," the "many melancholy proofs of the decay of private virtue," and asks if "the paltry consider-

ation of a little self to individuals is to be placed in competition with the essential rights and liberties of the present generations, and of millions yet unborn." He alludes to "the increasing rapacity of the times," and "the declining zeal of the people"; and speaks of "the virtuous few," who were struggling against the corruptions and "stock-jobbing of the multitude." Other documents might be cited, were further evidence necessary, to prove the selfishness and rapacity of individuals in those times.

Again, we frequently hear it said that the American people are less patriotic than their fathers were, and less ready to vindicate their rights. This accusation, also, we think, is unfounded, and we shall test its truth by reference to the records of the Revolution. In the first place, then, it should be remembered, though the war was undertaken for the holiest cause which ever arrayed men in battle, that the Whigs were a minority in some of the States, barely equalled their opponents in others, and in the whole country composed but an inconsiderable majority. The Loyalists embodied, and kept in the field, a large army of their partisans; and a considerable number of those who refrained from taking up arms were still active on the side of the crown, and by their conduct prolonged and embittered the contest. Whatever may be said to palliate the guilt of this portion of our countrymen, it will hardly be contended that they were distinguished for patriotism; and nearly one half of the adult male population of the country may therefore be dismissed from the discussion.

To say nothing of the Whigs of Vermont, who at one period were declared by Washington to be "a dead weight upon the cause," some examination of the resources\* of the thirteen confederate States has served to convince us, that, had the advice and plans of the Commander-in-chief, of Franklin, and other judicious and patriotic persons been adopted, and had there been system and common prudence and integrity in the management of affairs, the army might

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\* We do not admit that the Thirteen Colonies were poor, though such appears to be the common impression. Franklin estimated the annual consumption of tea, before the Revolution, at £500,000. The people who expended two and a half millions of dollars in a year for one article of luxury were not poor. During the most distressing periods of the contest, the importation of superfluities was continued to an extent which drew from Franklin earnest remonstrance and rebuke. See Sparks's edition of his Works, Vol. VIII. pp. 327, 376, 393, 403.

have been well fed, clothed, and paid throughout the struggle. Particular States, and thousands of individuals, exhausted their means to aid in achieving the independence of their country ; but we are satisfied that the want of patriotism in other States and in other individual Whigs produced the appalling calamities and distresses of the war, and compelled the resort to the seizure of private property, and other objectionable expedients. The issuing of bills of credit was, perhaps, unavoidable ; but their excessive depreciation might and should have been prevented. The exports of the Colonies before the war were large, and, with a liberal allowance for diminished production \* during the hostilities, there were still provisions in the country at all times to feed the people and both the Whig and the royal forces. The king's troops were well supplied ; for his generals paid "hard money," and not the "Continental stuff." "I am amazed," said Washington to Colonel Stewart, "at the report you make of the quantity of provision that goes daily into Philadelphia † from the county of Bucks" ; and this was written in January of that memorable winter which the American army passed in nakedness and starvation at Valley Forge.

So, too, there were men enough who in name were Whigs to meet the strongest force that was ever employed to suppress the popular movement. There was always an army — on paper ; but the votes of Congress were seldom executed by the States. At the close of one campaign, there was not a sufficient number of troops in camp to man the lines ; and at the opening of another, when the Commander-in-chief was expected to take the field, "scarce any State in the Union," as he himself said, had "an eighth part of its quota" in service. The bounty finally paid to soldiers was enormous. Omitting details, the general fact will be indicated by stating that the price for a single recruit was as high as seven hundred and fifty dollars in one State, and one thousand dollars in another, on enlistment for the war, besides the bounty and emoluments given by Congress ; and one hundred and fifty

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\* The prizes taken by the numerous Whig privateers were very valuable, and increased the ability of the country, probably, nearly as much as it was lessened by the partial interruption of agriculture. So successful were these privateers, that the premium of insurance, as appears by a speech in Parliament, rose to 20, and even 25 *per cent*.

† Then occupied by the royal army.

dollars "in specie" were exacted and paid for a term of duty of only five months. Such were the extraordinary inducements necessary to tempt some men to serve their country, when their dearest interests were at issue. Still, large numbers of the Whigs demanded that Washington should face and fight their enemies, without troops, without stores, and even at times without their own confidence and sympathy. If we admit that much of the reluctance to enter the army arose from the knowledge of the privations and sufferings to be endured in camp, and from aversion to receive payment for service in a depreciated currency, we shall palliate the conduct of the class expected to become soldiers only to censure by implication another class, who possessed, but kept back, the means of supporting those who fought their battles.

In the further vindication of the present generation from the charge of degeneracy, it becomes necessary to consider whether, in point of character, the army of our day will not compare favorably with that of the Revolution. It seems to be the common impression, that the rank and file of the force which achieved our independence were composed principally of the yeomanry and farmers of the country. As far as the regular Continental army is concerned, we consider this opinion a mistaken one. In some of the Colonies, the occupants of the soil were mere retainers or dependants of the great landholders, and, with them, very generally adhered to the royal cause; while in other districts, the recruiting officers often enlisted foreigners, deserters from the army of the king, minors, and even young boys. That persons of this description formed a large part of the army is not probable; but if we admit that the Continental line consisted of men of property in land, the conclusion, that the yeomanry of the Revolutionary era, as a class, were less moral than are those who now till the earth, becomes irresistible.

Making every allowance for the effects of hunger and want, for the claims of families at home, and for other circumstances equally imperative, we must still consider desertion, mutiny, robbery, and murder as high crimes. There were soldiers of the Revolution who deserted in parties of twenty and thirty at a time, and several hundreds of those who thus abandoned the cause fled to Vermont, and were among the early settlers of that State. A thousand men, the date of whose enlistment had been misplaced, perjured

themselves in a body, as fast as they could be sworn, in order to quit the service which they had voluntarily entered. In smaller parties, hundreds of others demanded dismissal from camp under false pretexts, and with lies upon their lips. Some also added treason to desertion, and joined the various corps of Loyalists in the capacity of spies upon their former friends, or of guides and pioneers. Many more enlisted, deserted, and reenlisted under new recruiting officers, for the purpose of receiving double bounty; while others, who placed their names upon the rolls, were paid the money to which they were entitled, but refused to join the army; and others still, who were sent to the hospitals, returned home without leave after their recovery, and were sheltered and secreted by friends and neighbours, whose sense of right was as weak as their own. Another class sold their clothing, provisions, and arms,\* to obtain means for revelling, and to indulge their propensity for drunkenness; while some prowled about the country, to rob and kill the unoffending and defenceless. A guard was placed over the grave of a foreigner of rank, who died in Washington's own quarters, and who was buried in full dress, with diamond rings and buckles, "lest the soldiers should be tempted to dig for hidden treasure."

These facts are sufficient to show that virtue in the American camp was not, at any rate, universal, and accusations of immorality may be made and proved against the Whig army as well as against those which have succeeded it. Indeed, we fear that whippings, drummings from the service, and even military executions, were more frequent in the Revolution than at any subsequent period of our history.

If we turn our attention to the officers, we shall find that many had but doubtful claims to respect for purity of private character, and that some were addicted to grave vices. We have not space to discuss the subject at length, and a general view must suffice. In point of personal courage and conduct, there were several delinquents of standing and rank. The battle of Breed's Hill was lost probably by the want of valor on the part of officers who were intrusted with honor-

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\* Such were the waste and theft of arms by the soldiers, that until Steuben had control of the matter, an allowance of five thousand stand, annually, was made in the official estimates, to meet the deficiency.

able and responsible commands ; \* and had not one of the British generals, † before the attack, tarried too long with the beautiful daughter of that stout old Loyalist, “ Master Lovell,” — who educated half of the prominent Whigs of Massachusetts, and was himself “ a castaway,” — the royal artillery might have been better served in the action, and the brave Prescott sooner driven from the works.

It affords us no pleasure to dwell upon the crimes and frailties of a single individual whose name is connected with, or distinguished in, our annals. We pass lightly over the cases of Lee and Arnold, and will only allude to two others, each of whom bore a general’s commission. One of them shocked the pure by his open and repeated scoffs at religion ; and the other passed a large portion of his life in tippling and gaming, and, though repentant in his declining years, it was pithily said of him, that “ no man better loved this world, and no man more reluctantly quitted it.”

In tracing the career of officers of inferior rank, we find much to lament. Judge Marshall states that Arnold was the only one who “ turned his sword against his former companions in arms ” ; but the great jurist was mistaken. We cannot go into details, and will barely remark that there were several who had held commissions in the Whig army who went over to the royal side, and that among them was one lieutenant-colonel, who had served a campaign under St.

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\* That the reader may not suppose we mean to censure the many brave men who participated in the battle, we state that Gridley, who commanded the battalion of artillery, and by whose misconduct it afforded but little aid, and Captain Callender, who withdrew his field-pieces and company from the strife, and Colonel Gerrish, who would not leave Bunker’s Hill, and whose whole regiment refused to march to Breed’s, and kept out of action during the three attacks, are here particularly alluded to.

† General Cleveland. It is said, that “ in order to win favor with the damsel, he had given her young brother an appointment in the ordnance department for which he was not qualified.” To this circumstance the sending over the “ over-sized cannon-balls ” is attributed, which occasioned delay, after the British troops landed at Morton’s Point. The mistake did not allow the artillery to be of essential service until suitable balls were obtained from Boston. Meantime, two attacks were repulsed. We hardly know of another mention of Cleveland’s name in the history of the war. It is a singular coincidence, that the artillery on *both* sides should have been badly served. The celebrated Count Rumford desired employment in the Whig army at this time, and would, but for the course of Colonel Gridley, who obtained the appointment for his son above mentioned, have commanded the American artillery on this occasion. Rumford subsequently adhered to the crown, and was a colonel of dragoons. — See *Life of Warren*, by the late A. H. Everett, in Sparks’s Biography.

Clair, and another who had raised the corps which he was appointed to command.

It is certain that appointments were conferred upon unworthy persons at every period of the war. Knox wrote to Gerry, that there were men in service "who wished to have their power perpetuated at the expense of the liberties of the people," and who "had been rewarded with rank without having the least pretensions to it, except cabal and intrigue." There were officers who were destitute alike of honor and patriotism; who unjustly clamored for their pay, while they drew large sums of public money under pretence of paying their men, but applied them to the support of their own extravagance; who went home on furloughs, and never returned; and who, regardless of their word as gentlemen, violated their paroles, and were threatened by Washington with exposure in every newspaper in the land, as men who had disgraced themselves and were insensible to the sufferings of their associates in captivity, whose restraints were increased by their misconduct. At times, courts-martial were continually sitting, and so numerous were the convictions, that the names of those who were cashiered were sent to Congress in lists. "Many of the surgeons," said Washington, "are very great rascals, countenancing the men to sham complaints to exempt them from duty, and often receiving bribes to certify indispositions, with a view to procure discharges or furloughs"; and still further, they drew for the public "medicines and stores, in the most profuse and extravagant manner, for private purposes." In a letter to the governor of a State, he affirmed that the officers who had been sent him therefrom were "generally of the lowest class of the people," that they "led their soldiers to plunder the inhabitants, and into every kind of mischief." To his brother, John Augustine Washington, he declared that the different States were nominating such officers as were "not fit to be shoe-blacks." \*

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\* Among the amusing proofs to sustain Washington in so emphatic an expression of his contempt and disgust, two instances may be cited. The first relates to a captain of horse, who was to be seen shaving his privates on parade! The other is of a colonel, who employed his two sons for waiters, and allowed one of them to work at shoe-making in his own apartment, when not required to perform the menial duties of a body servant. A mob overthrew and destroyed the shoe-maker's bench, and put an end to cobbling at regimental head-quarters. In the affray, the colonel, who had long endured the sneers of the officers of another line; was assaulted and much injured.



Resignations occurred upon discreditable pretexts, and became alarmingly prevalent. Some resigned at critical moments, and others combined together in considerable numbers for purposes of intimidation, and threatened to retire from the service at a specified time, unless certain terms were complied with. For a single instance, to show the extent of the evil, we again quote from the Commander-in-chief, who wrote to a member of Congress, in 1778, that "the spirit of resigning commissions has been long at an alarming height, and increases daily. The Virginia line has sustained a violent shock. Not less than ninety have already resigned to me. The same conduct has prevailed among the officers from the other States, though not yet in so considerable a degree; and there are but too just grounds to fear that it will shake the very existence of the army, unless a remedy is soon, very soon, applied." The spirit did not abate; since, two years after, he informed the President of Congress, that he had "scarcely a sufficient number [of officers] left to take care even of the fragments of corps which remained."

We would not be understood to assert that there were not proper and imperative causes to justify the retirement of many; but the illustrious man whose words we have so often quoted, and who was obliged to bear the disheartening consequences of these frequent resignations, was a competent judge of the motives and reasons which influenced those with whom he was associated; and as we have his assertion that he was often *deserted*, we have not hesitated to class the numerous resignations of the officers of the Revolutionary army with the other evidences of a destitution of principle. The complaints of their wives and children at home, the inattention of Congress and of the State legislatures, to whom they had a right, both legal and moral, to look for sympathy and support in the poverty to which some were reduced, are to be taken into the account in forming, and should do much to soften, our judgment; but with the proofs before us, obtained entirely from the writings of distinguished Whigs, we are compelled to believe that many of those who abandoned Washington were guilty of a crime, which, when committed by private soldiers, is called desertion, and punished with death.

Eighteen of the generals retired during the war; some from declining health, others from the weight of advanced

years, others to accept of civil employments, but many from private resentments, and real or imaginary wrongs inflicted by Congress or associates in the service. Several of the latter class are not to be held excused. Their example was pernicious, and when so many heads of divisions and brigades abandoned their commands for reasons chiefly or entirely personal, it was to be expected that regiments, battalions, and companies would be left, in like manner, without officers. Washington's individual grievances were very great, and every one must feel indignant at the treatment received by Greene; but when and by whom would the yoke of our Colonial vassalage have been broken, had *they* sacrificed their duty to their sensibility? Had the generals who were offended at the promotion of their brethren acted upon the principle of the noble son\* of South Carolina, "We will first dispose of our enemies, and *then* settle the questions of rank," the names of some of them would not be mentioned by students of our history in terms of doubtful approbation.

Abundant testimony can be adduced to show that individuals of all ranks entered the army from interested and discreditable motives, and left it from similar reasons. John Adams wrote, in 1777, — "I am wearied to death with the wrangles between military officers, high and low. They quarrel like cats and dogs. They worry one another like mastiffs, scrambling for rank and pay like apes for nuts." Washington, more guarded to Congress, uses language almost as pointed in his letters to private friends. The disaffections which arose at a later time, in consequence of the unwarrantable promotion of foreign military adventurers, ought not to be censured. The embarrassments of the Commander-in-chief from this source were very great, and drew from him the remark, in a private letter to Gouverneur Morris, that he "most devoutly wished that we had not a single foreigner among us, except the Marquis de Lafayette." Strange that Congress should have been so criminally unmindful of the claims of natives of the country! Certainly, if we except Mercer and Lafayette, and perhaps Steuben, the American-born generals were the best in the service.

Again, indications of our increasing degeneracy are supposed to be found in the fickleness of the popular will, as

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\* Charles Cotesworth Pinckney.

manifested in the frequent changes in Congress, and in the inferior characters of those who are chosen to be members of that body. But how was it in the past ? We can dispose of the first point by stating the single fact, that McKean, of Delaware, was the only member of the Congress of the Revolution who served eight successive years ; and that Jefferson, Gerry, and Ellery were the only signers of the Declaration of Independence who remained in service when the definitive treaty of peace was submitted for consideration. The attendance of members, at times, was irregular, and the public service often suffered by their absence. There were periods when several of the States were without representation, and when the requisite number for the transaction of business were not in their places. The entire control of affairs, executive and legislative, of the measures taken to procure loans in Europe and to raise money at home to provide for the army, and for every branch of the public service, devolved frequently upon as few as thirty delegates ; and some of the most momentous questions were determined by twenty. Those who steadily attended to their duties were worn down with care and excessive labor. John Adams, one of them, was in Congress three years and three months, during which term he was a member of ninety committees, and chairman of twenty-five. In the course of the war, persons of small claims to notice or regard obtained seats in Congress, and by their want of capacity and principle prolonged the contest, and needlessly increased its burdens and expenses. This statement can be shown to be true upon the highest authority ; proofs of it may be found in the correspondence of all the principal personages of the time.

The decline of public virtue is said to be seen, also, in increased sectional feeling, and in the malignant disposition which one portion of the American people evince towards their brethren in another part of the country. We reply, that there never has been entire harmony between the North and the South, from the earliest hour of their connection. Perfect unanimity of sentiment is not to be expected now or ever ; but we deny that there is less kindness at present than there was under the Confederacy, or in the first days of the Union. Whoever is familiar with the proceedings in the Congress, and with the angry collisions in the army, of the Revolution, and recalls the menaces and violent language ut-

tered during the presidency of Washington and his immediate successor, will agree with us, perhaps, in the opinion, that, as domestic quarrels do not always result in the dissolution of family ties, so also flippant paragraphs, resolves of associations, and oratorical flourishes do not always portend the separation of states and the division of a nation.

Allied to sectional feeling is the spirit of faction and party. In these respects, strange as the assertion may seem to some, we see a sensible change for the better. When we look back at the conduct of those who had an empire to win, we can readily account for, while we cannot wholly excuse, the enmity which existed between them and their opponents, the banishment of persons and the confiscation of estates ; but we are amazed at the dissensions of the Whigs among themselves. Overlooking the minor factions, we read of the governors of States struggling against both Whigs and Tories ; of the hot disputes in Congress on the appointment of ambassadors to foreign courts, and on determining the relative rank of different officers in the service ; of the strong prejudices entertained against Franklin in the State of his birth, in Congress, and in the State of his adoption ; of the party arrayed against Greene ; of the equivocal support of Washington by many, of the open manifestation of hostility to him after the disasters at Brooklyn heights, and of the combination — more extensive than some have been willing to believe — which was finally formed to displace him ; and of the force of party discipline, which, as was bitterly remarked by a leading Whig, brought men into the management of affairs “ who might have lived till the millennium in silent obscurity, had they depended on their mental qualifications.” As we examine the history of the civil administration of Washington, we find that he who had rendered such invaluable services to his country without pecuniary reward was now assailed with the atrocious charge of drawing money from the treasury fraudulently and for his private use ; and when he affixed his official signature to the treaty negotiated by Jay, the shouts of disappointed and enraged partisans resounded through the Union. The frenzy that was occasioned in this country by the Revolution in France showed itself in a manner that more than rivalled the party associations, banners, and badges of our own day ; and grosser falsehoods cannot be collected from party newspapers at the

present time, than those which were circulated during the canvass for a successor to the first President.

There were bad men among both the real and the nominal Whigs of the Revolution, among those who remained steadfast, as well as those who fell off from the cause, and the fact should neither be concealed nor denied. Still, there is much to palliate their errors, and to excuse some of the failings for which that generation has been most strongly censured. No colonists, we again remind the reader, have a character of their own. Every thing they say, do, and think is but the repetition of something which has been said, thought, or done "at home." It is so with British colonists now; it was so with those of the "old Thirteen."

Besides the effect thus produced on the formation of national character, we should remember that several of the prominent personages of the time were natives of the British isles, and claimed the deference and consideration which persons thus born always have, and still demand, among British Americans. Some of the Englishmen who espoused the popular side, though distinguished for talents, were mere adventurers and men of wicked lives. Their influence and example were pernicious in the highest degree, and it is upon them that the stigma of the attempt to displace Washington, and many of the severest rebukes which we have uttered, should principally fall.

We have endeavoured to show that the charges which are made against the present generation, like the sins which exist among them, are as old as the Revolution, and were used by the adherents of the crown as an argument to prevent a dissolution of the union with the mother country. Once severed from the parent stock, it was said that Americans would become the victims of every moral and political disorder. Those who insist that we are the degenerate sons of worthy sires do but echo the predictions which the Loyalists uttered seventy years ago. The opinion of Proud, the loyal historian of Pennsylvania, was cited at the commencement of this article. Chalmers, a Loyalist of Maryland, whose works on American history are of acknowledged merit, gravely remarked, that "whether the famous achievement of Columbus introduced the greatest good or evil, by discovering the New World to the Old, has in every age offered a subject for disputation." With these words he opens an elaborate work

devoted to an explanation of the causes which produced the dismemberment of the British empire. But is it *now* a question for disputation, whether the transplanting of Englishmen to America has occasioned more evil than good? Our fathers were but British colonists, and as such might rightfully claim immunities and exemptions to which we, the members of an independent nation, are not entitled. Two generations have elapsed since we commenced the experiment of self-government. In developing our resources, and in increasing our wealth, we have done more than any nation of modern times. Our territory is vastly more than sufficient for the subsistence of those who now inhabit it, but is still deemed by many quite too small to meet our future growth. If, then, we have made, and are making, no progress in virtue, the fault is all our own, and the consequences of it will be upon our heads and upon those of our children.

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ART. IX. — *Reports of the Annual Visiting Committees of the Public Schools of the City of Boston.* 1847. Boston : J. H. Eastburn, City Printer. pp. 123 and 91.

THE idea of popular education may be said to lie at the basis of the free institutions of New England. Amidst all the changes in public and private affairs, through the calm of peace and the storms of war, this idea has never been lost sight of, as one, to carry out which into complete practical results constant efforts must be made. We have, however, fallen far short of the perfect attainment of this end, — nay, of what a people so earnestly bent on the fulfilment of this high purpose might reasonably have been expected to reach.

Of late years, however, public attention has been thoroughly roused to the importance of doing more to forward the magnificent conception of educating the people. The labors of Mr. Horace Mann, who left the profession of the law, the highest honors of which his abilities and the estimation they were held in by the public justified him in aspiring to, in order that he might consecrate his energies and his time to the holy cause of popular education, have so set the machinery of progress in